

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 21, 2013

Mr. Thomas Bach  
President  
International Olympic Committee  
Château de Vidy  
Case postale 356  
1001 Lausanne  
Switzerland

Dear President Bach:

As Members of the United States Congress with great respect for the mission and objective of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Olympic Games), we write to affirm our support for the Fundamental Principles of Olympism and express our grave concern regarding ongoing discrimination in the Russian Federation, the host country of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Winter Olympics next year.

We applaud the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic Games for their many successes, to date, in promoting peace through sport. The Olympic Games are unparalleled in their ability to bring together people of various cultures and backgrounds. In fact, as you know, it is a basic principle of the Olympic Games to promote respect for universal fundamental ethical principles in a setting free of discrimination. In particular, Fundamental Principle of Olympism Number Six explicitly prohibits “[a]ny form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise.” Like you, we understand the necessity of compassion and non-discrimination in order to build a peaceful and better world.

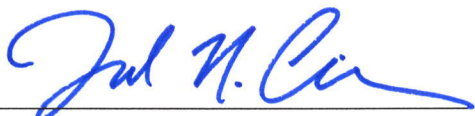
We are concerned with discriminatory practices in the Russian Federation that are antithetical to the Olympic Principles, especially regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons. Among other concerning actions, Russia’s recently enacted anti-“propaganda” law, prohibiting the promotion of “non-traditional sexual relations,” is the most widely reported government action targeting LGBT individuals and families. This type of state-sanctioned discrimination, and the violence it encourages, creates a host country atmosphere that is not conducive to the peaceful promotion of sport. We are concerned about the safety and well-being of LGBT athletes and spectators from all countries, including Russia.

Although we appreciate your recent reassurance that the IOC is committed to non-discrimination, we are concerned that the IOC has not adequately addressed actions attacking or abridging basic human rights. The Olympic Games will not be truly free from discrimination unless the IOC acknowledges and repudiates widespread oppression. Before and during these Games, the IOC has an opportunity to convey to the Russian Federation, and future host countries, that discrimination is not conducive to bringing the world together in peace. We encourage the IOC to be a leader in the promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination, and cultural

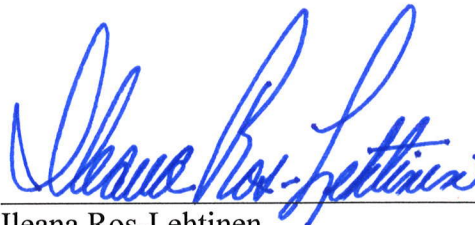
exchange. First, we ask the IOC to support athletes who express support for the basic human rights of LGBT individuals. Second, we ask you to ensure that there is a safe space for LGBT athletes, trainers and officials, and guests in the Olympic Village. Finally, we believe the IOC should follow the example recently set by the United States Olympic Committee and explicitly include sexual orientation in existing non-discrimination policies.

The IOC has a unique ability to continue advancing the cause of protecting human rights in all corners of the globe, as we have seen in its efforts to further gender equality. While we understand that politics are not a component of the Olympic Games, we believe the upcoming Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, provide an opportunity for the IOC to ensure the integrity of the Olympic Charter now and for future generations. Strong statements and actions by the IOC that uphold ideals of non-discrimination and commit to the protection of human rights will illustrate how the Olympic Games achieve their fundamental principle of “plac[ing] sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind.”

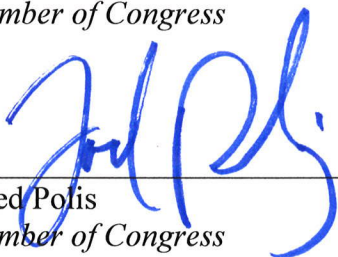
Sincerely,



David N. Cicilline  
*Member of Congress*



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
*Member of Congress*



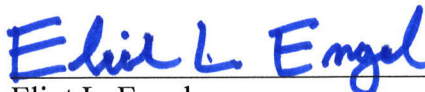
Jared Polis  
*Member of Congress*



Mark Pocan  
*Member of Congress*



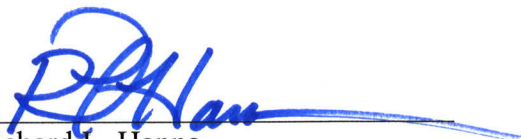
Mark Takano  
*Member of Congress*



Eliot L. Engel  
*Member of Congress*

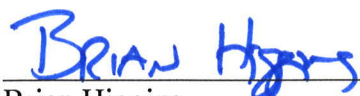


Alan S. Lowenthal  
*Member of Congress*

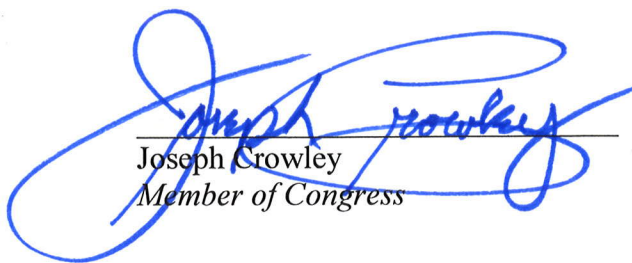


Richard L. Hanna  
*Member of Congress*





Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress



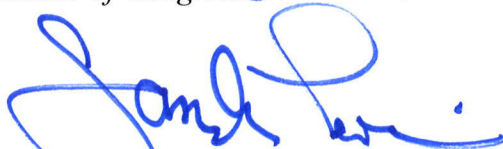
Joseph Crowley  
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



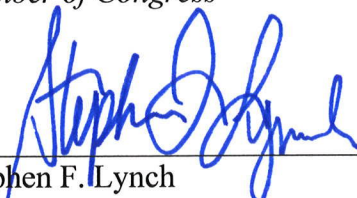
Sander M. Levin  
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Yvette D. Clarke  
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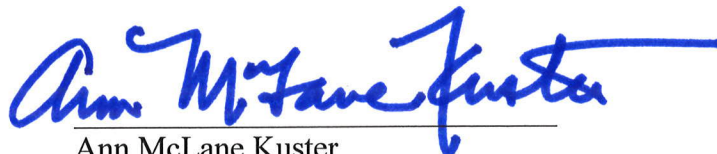
Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch  
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Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress



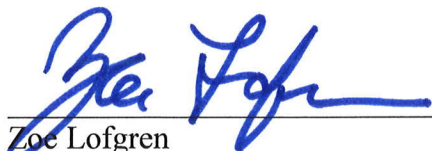
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



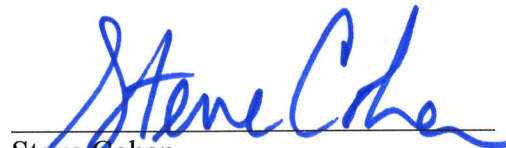
Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress




Christopher P. Gibson  
Member of Congress



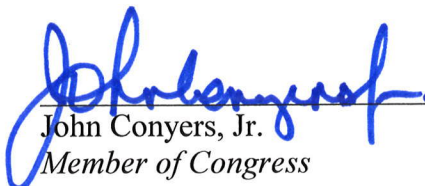
Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



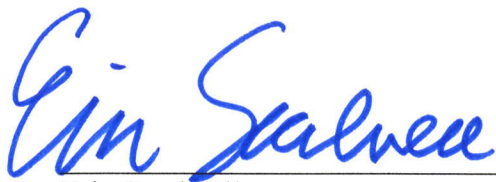
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



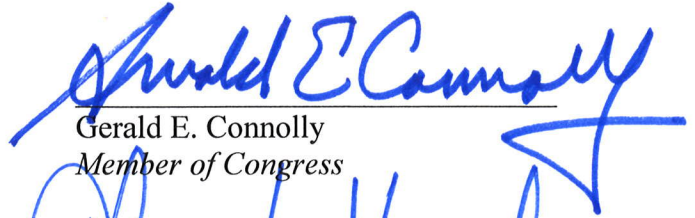
Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



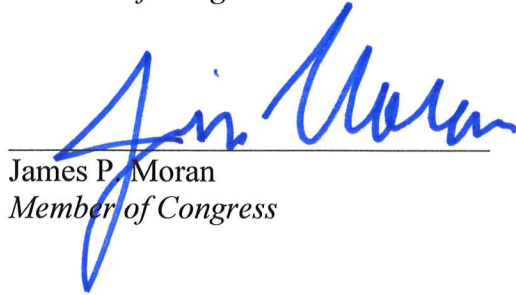
John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress



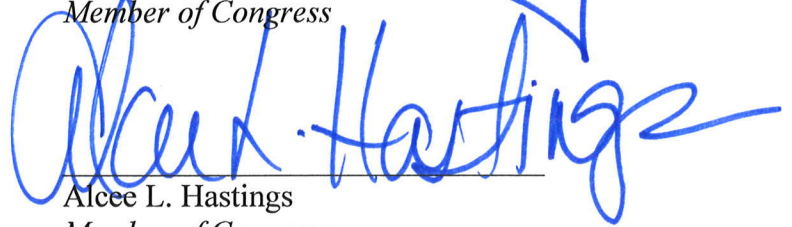
Eric Swalwell  
*Member of Congress*



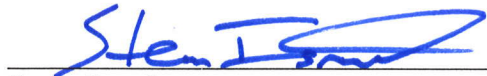
Gerald E. Connolly  
*Member of Congress*



James P. Moran  
*Member of Congress*



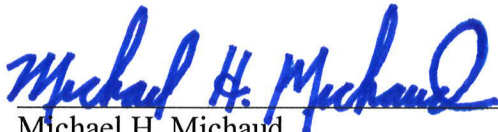
Alcee L. Hastings  
*Member of Congress*



Steve Israel  
*Member of Congress*



Jim McDermott  
*Member of Congress*



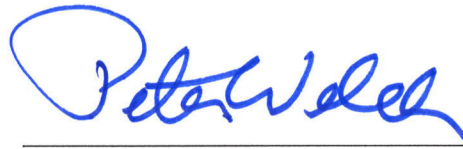
Michael H. Michaud  
*Member of Congress*



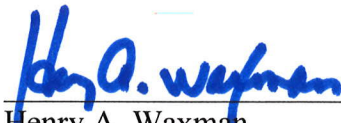
Mike Quigley  
*Member of Congress*



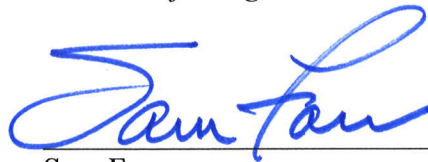
Lois Frankel  
*Member of Congress*



Peter Welch  
*Member of Congress*



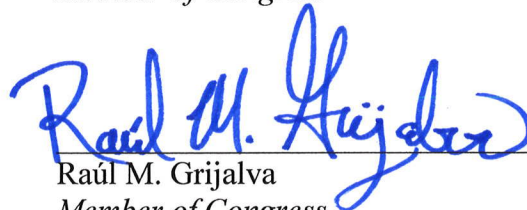
Henry A. Waxman  
*Member of Congress*



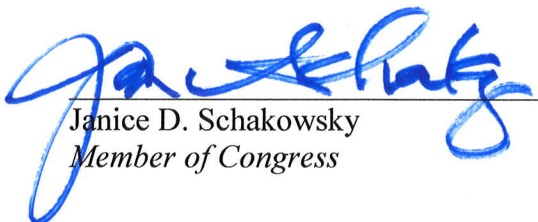
Sam Farr  
*Member of Congress*



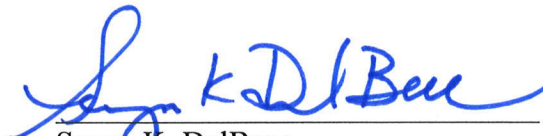
Keith Ellison  
*Member of Congress*



Raúl M. Grijalva  
*Member of Congress*



Janice D. Schakowsky  
*Member of Congress*



Suzan K. DelBene  
*Member of Congress*



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Jackie Speier  
*Member of Congress*



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Luis V. Gutierrez  
*Member of Congress*



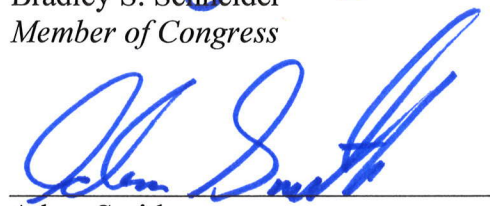
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Bradley S. Schneider  
*Member of Congress*



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Adam B. Schiff  
*Member of Congress*



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Adam Smith  
*Member of Congress*



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Julia Brownley  
*Member of Congress*




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Matthew A. Cartwright  
*Member of Congress*



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Michael M. Honda  
*Member of Congress*



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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
*Member of Congress*